

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

January 16, 2020

Call to order:

A meeting of the University of North Alabama's Faculty Senate convened in Room 330 within the Gunn University Commons building at 3:30pm. with President Renfroe presiding.

I. Proxies:

Matthew Balentine for Sunhui Sim (Department of Geography), Linda Armstrong for Trudy Abel (Department of Elementary Education), George Makowski for Ansley Quiros (Department of History), Yi-Min Cai for Ian Loepky, and Helen Coronel for Laura Williams (Department of Nursing and Health Professions – Graduate Programs)

Members in attendance:

Lori Alford, Rae Atencio, Stephanie Barger, Aaron Benson, Tabitha Blasingame, Tim Butler, Cory Cagle, Lisa Clayton, Wes Davenport, Frank Diaz, Sarah Franklin, Ravi Gollapalli, Leah Graham, John Hodges, Scott Infanger, Christopher Klein, John McGee, Janet McMullen, Prema Monteiro, Eric O'Neal, Katie Owens-Murphy, Cheryl Price, Jason Price, Lee Renfroe, Terry Richardson, Craig Robertson, Leigh Stanfield, Kevin Stoltz, Jessica Stovall, Jill Stupiansky, Alexander Takeuchi, Mark Terwilliger, Brain Thompson, Jason Watson, and Pete Williams.

Members not in attendance (without proxy):

Lisa Ann Blankenship (Department of Biology), Thomas Lukowicz (Department of Music), Janna Malone (Department of Entertainment Industry), and Gary Padgett (Department of Secondary Education).

II. Approval of agenda:

President Renfroe requested approval of the Jan. 16th meeting agenda with an amendment to remove from consideration item X-B-Academic Honesty Policy Q & A.

The motion to amend the Jan. 16th meeting agenda was initiated by Senator Stovall and seconded by Senator Richardson.

The motion to approve the amended agenda passed.

III. Approval of the Minutes

Senator Richardson motioned to approve the minutes from the December 5th, 2019 meeting of the Faculty Senate with a second by Dr. Makowski (proxy for Senator Quiros).

The minutes were approved.

IV. Remarks from President Kitts

President Kitts began his remarks by referencing a recent story presented in the Flor-Ala discussing Project 208. President Kitts stressed the importance of impressing upon the state legislature the effects of historical inequity in state funding on UNA. He continues to work with Governor Ivy's staff to convey the depth of these historic funding deficits and their impact on UNA. He is working to advance a one-time ideal "correction" of \$10 million to create new parity between UNA and its peer institutions and then efforts will be directed toward annualized percentage increases. Governor Ivy's budgetary plan for 2021 will be presented within the next few weeks and its contents tend to influence legislative deliberations.

President Kitts then discussed two recent (Jan. 8th [in the Shoals] and Jan. 9th [in Decatur]) information discussion forums where UNA representatives met with state legislatures and briefed them on pressing UNA needs. He reported that legislators appeared pleased that UNA's leadership traveled to meet them to express UNA's needs.

President Kitts also discussed the uncertain nature of the future one-time bond bill that hinges on Governor Ivy's authorization. If these funds are, in part, allocated to higher education, UNA will lobby for its share of those funds.

UNA is committed to recreating the iconic Harrison Plaza Fountain. The administration, Mr. Michael Gautney and an architect are working to assess better sustainable material options to reconstruct the fountain to the state desired by its founder. Bids may be ready for evaluation within 2-3 weeks. Ideally, the fountain should be repaired and operational by August 2020.

President Kitts concluded his remarks by updating the Senate on UNA's partnership with Schneider Electric to promote greater energy efficiency at UNA. He stated that the work is on schedule and should be completed late in the Fall 2020 semester.

V. Remarks from Dr. Ross Alexander (VPAA/Provost)

Dr. Alexander remarked on the recently concluded Winter Session enrollments that were up 35% over last year's session. This percent increase represented a total enrollment of approximately 1,000 students.

He then discussed the recently finalized learning agreement, the first of its kind involving any university, with the U.S. Space and Rocket Center. The agreement should positively impact the Center as well as academic programs in education, public history, business administration, and engineering technology here at UNA. The agreement places the UNA brand at the facility, allows UNA to access the market of Space Camp attendees as well as create options for building new curricula.

Another learning agreement has been reached with the State of Alabama extending state employees' financially discounted access to many UNA undergraduate and graduate programs.

UNA received recent ACHE approval to launch the state's first Micro-credentials programs. Professional Accounting, Instructional Technology and Design, Spanish for the Standardized Clinical Encounter, and Medical Simulation (this program to launch Summer, 2020).

Dr. Alexander also announced UNA's new partnership with Guizhou University in China involving 4+0 and 2+0 programs. Guizhou University is regarded as a top-tier university in China and educates 50,000+ students. UNA aims to extend its robust undergraduate and, where applicable, graduate programs in engineering/manufacturing technology, earth systems sustainability, chemistry and industrial hygiene, health sciences, and business/CIS to Guizhou students. In short, UNA will provide the instructional faculty and Guizhou will provide the physical resources. This partnership extends UNA's brand and holds the promise of increased enrollments and revenue. According to Dr. Alexander, this partnership is replicable across China and the world.

Dr. Alexander then addressed UNA's movement toward development and launch of Ph.D. programs. The Ph.D. program in Exercise Science and Health Promotion is on track to begin admitting students for the Fall, 2020 semester. The Executive Doctorate in Business Administration should begin admitting students for the Spring, 2021 semester.

Dr. Alexander concluded his remarks by updating the Faculty Senate on facility updates. Those were described as follows:

- Harrison Hall – complete late spring/early summer
- Norton Auditorium – two phase renovation with phase one involving seating, paint, aesthetic improvements to be completed by mid-march and phase two, involving new rigging, shell, and stage) to be completed during the summer of 2020.
- Collier Library/University Success Center – bids are out for renovations to Collier to accommodate the University Success Center and its staff. The University Success Center's move to Collier Library should be completed during the Spring, 2020 semester.
- Purchase of the College Street property in Florence is being finalized. Renovations may take approximately one year.
- Renovations to the UNA Planetarium and Observatory are nearly complete.

- Renovations to the Bennet Infirmary facility will begin during the Spring 2020 semester. This facility will accommodate the new Human Performance Lab and should be completed by Summer/Early Fall, 2020.
- Renovations to the Communications Building will begin Spring, 2020.
- A widened sidewalk from the Gunn Commons Building to Harrison Plaza has been completed.

VI. Remarks from Faculty Senate President Lee Renfroe

President Renfroe referenced only the recent open forum to discuss academic honesty issues and policy at UNA and thanked those that attended. That forum was held on January 13, 2020 in Room 330 of the Gunn Commons.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Standing Committees

1. Faculty Affairs Committee

Senator Klein mentioned that the Faculty Affairs Committee has requested additional information pertaining to its current charge to examine the current faculty workload policy and issues related to inconsistencies of that policy and its application across the university.

2. Academic Affairs

No report was offered.

3. Faculty Attitude Survey

No report was offered but the committee intends to meet soon.

4. Faculty Handbook Oversight Committee

No report was offered.

VIII. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

IX. New Business

A. Course Evaluations – Open and Close Dates

See Appendix A.

Senator Stovall explained that faculty in the Mathematics Department are concerned with the prescribed dates defining the opening and closing of on-line course evaluations. Study day, last day to drop a course day, and closing day for student input are all dates that compromise the validity of course evaluation data. Senator Stovall expressed that a consistent date for the opening and closing of course evaluations before the official beginning of the exam period is warranted.

Senator Infanger, consistent with the text presented in Appendix A, motioned that course evaluations should not be open until after the drop deadline, but should close on the last day of class.

Dr. Makowski (a proxy for Senator Quiros) seconded the motion.

Discussion was then centered on eight week, four week and mini-semesters and what appropriate dates for course evaluation might then apply. It was made clear that even these semesters have defined dates to drop courses.

Dr. Alexander stated that the wishes of the Faculty Senate will be implemented as soon as possible.

A secondary motion was made by Senator Richardson to postpone a vote on this item until the February Faculty Senate Meeting.

Dr. Makowski seconded the motion.

The motion to postpone a vote on this passed with one abstention.

B. Requirement of “previous” department chair and “new” department chair signatures on the change of major forms

See Appendix B.

This item was brought to the floor and Senator Infanger discussed the issues pointing to the new practice that requires students, who change their major, to obtain signatures from their former department chair as well as their new department chair in order to process a change of major form. This new practice is causing unnecessary advising delays, delayed student registration, and administrative bottlenecks. It was also mentioned that no one was clear how this practice became new policy.

Senator Infanger motioned to remove the former department chair’s signature line from the change of major form that was revised and implemented during the Fall, 2019 semester.

Senator Robertson seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

X. Information Items

A. Mr. Todd Vardaman and Ms. Sherry Kennemer – NCAA Rules and Compliance Issues

See Appendix C.

Mr. Todd Vardaman and Ms. Sherry Kennemer provided an informative discussion regarding NCAA rules and regulations pertaining to student-athlete education and progress toward graduation as well as advice for UNA faculty and staff who might interact with UNA athletic recruits and current student athletes.

XI. Adjourn

Senator Richardson motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Senator Infanger seconded the motion.

The Faculty Senate's meeting adjourned at 4:42pm.

Appendix A

New Business – Item A

Issue:

The online evaluations are open through the last day of finals. The justification told to our faculty member by an administrative office was because grades weren't due until Thursday, despite the fact that many people post grades on Canvas before then, and even if they don't, many do not want students to have taken the final before they do the evaluations. The faculty member was told that the department chair can request a different deadline for the whole department, but that she can't just make it the last day of classes for everyone because "the last day of classes varies by department". This is not true. The class information on UNA's website lists the "Last day of class" as the day before study day.

The evaluations should not be open until after the drop deadline, but should close on the last day of class.

Appendix B.

New Business – Item B

Issue:

The new administrative practice of requiring students to get the signature of the department chair of the department they are leaving as well as the signature of the department chair of the department they are transferring into is causing unnecessary delays and administrative bottlenecking.


Before midway through last semester, students who sought to change their major only had to fill out a change of major request form and submit it to the administrative assistant of the department they were transferring into. I am sure that the relaxed nature of this process resulted in a number of hasty major changes, but as long as the student was willing to fill out and sign the form and the admin was willing to enter the information in the computer, the process was quick and allowed students to be immediately assigned an advisor in their new department and be recorded among the majors in that department.

The new policy, as I mentioned above, requires students to obtain the signature of the department chair of the department they are leaving before they can be officially changed in the system. Why is this necessary? It only slows down the process and forces students into an awkward and difficult situation of having to locate the department chair and then explain that they no longer want to major in that program. Not only is this unnecessary for the students, it also burdens our department chairs, who have to be available to sign this form. The inefficiency of this practice has been demonstrated very clearly this week as not all faculty have yet returned to campus and department chairs are not available to sign this form.

I propose that we eliminate this practice of requiring students to obtain signatures of both department chairs before they are able to officially change their major and return to the practice of having them submit the previous change of major form. Department chair signatures need only be required of those new programs, and even then, only for programs that require direct admission to the program (e.g. nursing or education).

If the purpose of having students obtain the signature of the chair of the department they are leaving is to keep them informed of the changes in their numbers, then there are easy solutions to this. For example, the admin of the new program/department can copy or scan the change of major form and send it directly to the department chair of the program the student is transferring out of. If the Registrar also needs this information, then they can also be included in the email chain. If we desire to reduce paperwork, then we can create or obtain a web tool that allows students to officially change their major online. Surely Banner has this type of feature already built in.

Appendix C.



University of North Alabama

NCAA RULES EDUCATION FOR UNA FACULTY AND STAFF

As an NCAA and ASUN/Big South Conference member institution, the University of North Alabama is obligated to follow the rules governing college athletics. This obligation extends beyond Lion Athletics to all UNA employees. The following are the rules relating to faculty and staff interactions with prospective and current student-athletes.

FACULTY/STAFF GUIDELINE #1

No Gifts or Benefits

<p>Faculty/staff cannot give things to prospective (9th-12th grade) or enrolled student-athletes unless those things (e.g., items or services) are generally available to all prospective or enrolled student-athletes.</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money or discounts Items of value (e.g., hats, shirts) Tickets to movies or other events Transportation Meals
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FACULTY/STAFF GUIDELINE #2

No Recruiting

<p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">In-Person Contacts</p> <p>Faculty/staff cannot have face-to-face contacts with prospects that are directed or arranged by UNA coaches unless they occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On UNA's campus; or • Off campus (within 30 miles) if the prospects are on NCAA official paid visits. 	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Electronic Communication</p> <p>Faculty/staff cannot:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email prospects (all sports except men's basketball) regarding athletics until September 1 of their junior year. • Email men's basketball prospects regarding athletics until June 15 at the conclusion of their sophomore year. • Post, favorite, retweet, or like anything on prospects' social media pages. • Publicize the recruitment of a prospect or prospect's visit to campus (e.g., posting a picture of prospect's visit on social media). 	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Telephone Calls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty/staff cannot call prospects regarding athletics. • Faculty/staff may receive calls from prospects that are unrelated to athletics. • Faculty/staff should inform prospects to direct questions about athletics to their UNA contacts.
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FACULTY/STAFF GUIDELINE #3

Follow all Institutional Policies and Procedures

<p>All institutional policies and procedures for students apply equally to student-athletes.</p>	<p>Whether it's a request for a grade change, extra credit; or the late submission of an assignment; make sure you follow institutional policies and procedures relating to these requests.</p>
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Ask Before You Act

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Principle of Rules Compliance

Each institution shall comply with all applicable rules and regulations of the Association in the conduct of its intercollegiate athletics program. It shall monitor its programs to assure compliance and to identify and report to the Association instances in which compliance has not been achieved. Members of an institution's staff, student-athletes, and other individuals representing the institution's athletics interests shall comply with all rules and the member institution shall be responsible for such compliance.

Admission

A student-athlete shall not represent an institution intercollegiate athletics competition unless the student has been admitted as a regularly enrolled, degree-seeking student in accordance with the regular, published entrance requirements of the institution.

Initial Eligibility

A student-athlete who enrolls in a member institution as an entering freshman with no previous full-time college attendance shall meet academic requirements in order to be eligible for financial aid, practice and competition during their first academic year of residence. Student-athletes must complete 16 NCAA-approved core courses, earn a minimum 2.30 GPA, earn an ACT or SAT score that matches the core-course GPA and be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center.

2-4 Transfers

Qualifier	Non-Qualifier / Academic Redshirt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum one full-time term attended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate from two-year college.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average of 12 transferable hours per full-time term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of three full-time terms attended.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.50 transferable GPA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 48-semester transferable hours.
OR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet requirements for a non-qualifier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 transferable hours English, 3 math and 3 science.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.50 transferable GPA.

Progress-Toward-Degree Requirements

Credit-Hour Requirements	Percentage of Degree	GPA Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6-hour requirement each term. 	40/60/80	90/95/100
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18-hour requirement each academic year 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24-hour requirement (first year only) 		

Financial Aid

"Financial Aid" is funds provided to student-athletes from various sources to pay or assist in paying their cost of education at the institution. As used in NCAA legislation, "financial aid" includes all institutional financial aid and other permissible financial aid.

Academic Honor Awards – Based on High School Record

Academic honor awards that are part of an institution's normal arrangements for academic scholarships, based solely on the recipient's high school record and awarded independently of athletics interests and in amounts consistent with the pattern of all such awards made by institutions, are exempt from an institution's equivalency computation, provided the recipient was ranked in the upper 10 percent of the high school graduating class or achieved a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.50 (based on a maximum of 4.00) or a minimum ACT sum score of 105 or a minimum SAT score of 1270 (critical reading and math).

Academic Honor Awards – Transfer Students

Academic honor awards that are part of an institution's normal arrangement for academic scholarships, awarded independently of athletics interests and in amounts consistent with the pattern of all such awards made by the institution, may be exempted from a team's equivalency computation, provided the recipient achieved a cumulative transferable grade-point-average of at least 3.00 (based on a maximum of 4.00).